

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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P R 010924Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1279

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 8789

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR KS KN UN

SUBJ: JAPANESE REACTION TO UNC PROPOSAL

SUMMARY. AFTER PROMINENT HEADLINES AND STORIES ABOUT ROK-US PROPOSAL TO ELIMINATE UNC IN KOREA ACCOMPANIED WITH EXPLANATION OF MOVE BY FONOFF, JAPANESE PUBLIC REACTION HAS BEEN MINIMAL. END SUMMARY.

1. ENGLISH AND JAPANESE PRESS BANNER HEADLINED US-ROK OFFER TO REPLACE UNC PROVIDED NK AND PRC AGREED '53 ARMISTICE AGREEMENT REMAINED IN FORCE. LENGTHY EXPLICATORY ARTICLES BASED ON WIRE SERVICE REPORTS ALSO CARRIED. AS COMPANION PIECE, MOST PRESS CARRIED FONOFF BACKGROUNDER EXPLAINING THAT OFFER, WHICH WAS IDENTIFIED AS WORK OF US, ROK AND JAPANESE GOVERNMENTS, WAS DESIGNED TO REPLACE UNC BUT RETAIN ARMISTACE. FONOFF SOURCE EXPLAINED THAT RESOLUTION SOUGHT TO MAINTAIN PEACE-KEEPING FRAMEWORK "THROUGH TALKS INSTEAD OF EXCHANGE OF VARIOUS RESOLUTIONS" FOR NORTH AND SOUTH KOREA AT UPCOMING UNGA SESSION. OFFICIAL NOTED THAT DISSOLUTION OF UNC MET NK DEMAND BUT ACKNOWLEDGED HE WAS UNSURE WHETHER NK WOULD BE WILLING TO MEET SK AT CONFERENCE TABLE FOR DISCUSSIONS.

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FINALLY, FONOFF SAID US TROOPS COULD STAY IN ROK UNDER BI-LATERAL

AGREEMENT REGARDLESS OF ACTION UN MIGHT TAKE.

2. ONLY EDITORIAL COMMENT THUS FAR IN CONSERVATIVE SANKEI SHIMBUN, WHICH SUPPORTED US EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN FRAMEWORK FOR PEACE AND EXPRESSED HOPE CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE COULD BE UNDERTAKEN.

3. COMMENT: LACK OF COMMENTARY REFLECTS FACT THAT CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION WAS GIVEN TO QUESTION OF UNC DURING DIET BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARINGS WEEK BEFORE LAST, MUCH OF WHICH FORESHADOWED THE PROPOSAL WHICH HAS NOW BEEN PUBLICIZED. MOREOVER, JAPANESE ARE CONVINCED THAT US WILL REMAIN IN ROK AT LEAST FOR PRESENT UNDER BI-LATERAL ARRANGEMENTS AND ROK'S SECURITY IS NOW TIED TO COMMITMENTS WITH US RATHER THAN UN MANDATE. ALTERNATE ARMISTICE ARRANGEMENTS WOULD RECEIVE WIDESPREAD PUBLIC SUPPORT IN JAPAN. THE QUESTION OF JAPAN'S INTERESTS IN KOREA AND CONTINGENCY THINKING FOR RESPONSE TO ISSUE OF USE OF US BASES IN JAPAN FOR ACTIVITIES IN KOREA IS STILL UNDER PUBLIC DISCUSSION. IN THE ESOTERIC SECURITY DEBATE WHICH HAS BEEN UNDERWAY FOR SEVERAL MONTHS IN JAPAN, ABOLITION OF UN LABEL ON US TROOP PRESENCE IN KOREA COULD AID OPPOSITION QUESTIONING IN DIET AND COMPLICATE GOJS FORMULATING A CLEAR PUBLIC POSITION, BUT CHANGE OF UNC WOULD NOT AFFECT SUBSTANCE OF ULTIMATE GOJ POLICY DECISIONS.
HODGSON

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